



Unitized Group Ration - Express (UGR-E)



The UGR-E (formally called the Remote Unit Self Heating Meal or RUSHM) is a compact, self-contained module that provides a complete, hot meal for 18 warfighters. With the simple pull of a tab, the food is heated within 45 minutes, and is served in trays to warfighters like a cook prepared meal.

Why is it Needed?

The desire of field commanders is to provide a high quality group meal as soon as possible. Often, tactical logistics will not provide for food service equipment and cooks to achieve this objective. Consequently, the UGR-E provides a group feeding system without the necessity of equipment, cooks, or when Combat Service Support is not yet available. Applications will include Current through Future Force Maneuver Sustainment for Initial Entry, and Future Force sustainment replenishment site feeding. The UGR-E also provides remote units such as Special Operational Forces, Signal Corps, Military Police, artillery forces, etc. an alternative to individual meals. After Combat Service Support is in place, the UGR-E will continue to provide remote units such as signal, MP, artillery, etc., an alternative to individual meals.

Technology:

A safe exothermic chemical reaction similar to the Flameless Ration Heater provides the heat needed to raise the temperature of the food from 40° F to 140° F within 45 minutes. Heaters are sandwiched between three or four polymeric trays containing an entrée, vegetable, starch, and/or desert. By pulling a tab, a pouch of salt water floods the heaters and initiates the reaction. An alternative activation method being explored is a one-step addition process that delivers an external source of water to the heaters which enhances shelf-stability and air-drop survivability.

A two-day Technical Demonstration of the UGR-E was completed on 3-4 December 2003 in Fort Lewis, WA. Positive feedback included ease of use, speed of heating, and quick clean up, which allowed more time for other tasks. Recommended improvements included adding an instruction to leave the insulating box in place until heating is complete, adding individual towelettes and a trash bag for easy sanitation, and making one of the four serving spoons slotted to better handle products containing brine. A larger user evaluation will be completed in 3Q04 to assess these and other potential enhancements, which may include catalytic and endothermic reactions for heating or chilling of beverages and other components.

Key Features/Benefits:

The UGR-E provides an alternative to an individual pre-packaged meal by affording warfighters a cook-prepared meal without the cost or logistic burden of a field kitchen. It allows a heat-on-the-move capability for group-feeding. Recent accomplishments in the UGR-E development program have resulted in a 20 percent reduction in the cube of the packaged module.

Point of Contact:

DoD Combat Feeding

Phone: COMM (508) 233-4402

E-Mail: amssb-rcf@natick.army.mil



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**NATICK
SOLDIER
CENTER**

Kansas St.
Natick, MA
01760
nsc.natick.army.mil

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